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PROBLEM

To estimate Chinese Communist capabilities and intentions with respect to securing control over Taiwan and the place of Taiwan in over-all Communist strategic planning for 1951.

QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. WHAT ARE COMMUNIST CHINA'S CAPABILITIES FOR SECURING CONTROL OVER TAIWAN?

A. What Chinese Communist Resources are Available for an Assault on Taiwan?

1. Strength and Disposition of Forces

(a) Ground Forces. Chinese Communist Field Forces presently number 2,069,000. Of this total, it is reported that some 325,000 are currently deployed along the east coast of China from the Yangtze to Canton. A significant portion of the Third Field Army troops which were deployed in positions opposite Taiwan in 1950 are now engaged in the Korean theater of operations.

A large percentage of the Third Field Army was trained for and conducted amphibious operations against Hainan and other islands formerly held by the Chinese Nationalists. Reports continue to be received of small scale amphibious training in the Hingwa coastal area opposite the northern end of Taiwan. The number of Chinese troops who have received amphibious training is not known.

(b) Air Forces. The Chinese Communist Air Force is estimated to have available approximately 650 aircraft, of fighter, ground attack, light bomber, and transport types, of which 200-250 are believed to be under control of the Soviet Air Force. The serviceability rate of these aircraft is estimated to be 50%.

It is estimated that currently the bulk of the aircraft available to the Chinese Communists are located in Northeastern China, and in Manchuria. Accordingly, a major redeployment of aircraft by the Chinese Communists would be necessary before a maximum air offensive could be launched against Taiwan.

Maximum CCAF sortie capabilities, based on three missions during the initial 24-hour period, are estimated to be 624 for fighters, 358 for ground attack aircraft, 284 for light bombers, and 113 for transports. It is estimated, however, that combat and maintenance attrition would reduce the combat effectiveness of the CCAF substantially in less than a week of sustained operations, in the absence of substantial Soviet aid.

Review of this document by CIA has determined that

☒ CIA has no objection to declassification of this information if it contains information of CIA interest that must remain

☐ It contains nothing of CIA interest

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Adequate air facilities are available to the CCAF on the China Mainland within light bomber radius of Taiwan (660 nautical miles). Airfields within 170 n.m. radius, suitable for attack type plane, are located principally in the Fuchow and Lungchi areas in Fukien Province. A second group of fields are within jet fighter range (245 n.m.). Swatow is within this area. A third group of airfields are those within light bomber range of Taiwan. Prominent in this group are airfields in the Hankow and Canton areas, and in the Hangchow-Shanghai-Nanking area.

There has been an intense airfield repair and facilities build-up program underway in China during the past year, especially in the coastal belt from Shanghai southerly to Canton. Existing airfields are being improved, and previous sites reactivated, bringing them to a standard required for the operation of jet and light bomber type aircraft. This work has been principally under Soviet supervision.

The over-all personnel strength of the CCAF is estimated to be at least 15,000 of which 1,200 are estimated to be active CCAF pilots. In addition, about 3,000 pilots are reported to be in training schools located in China and Manchuria. The training of CCAF personnel is believed greatly increased in recent months and the quality of training improved. Morale of the CCAF is believed to be high.

(c) Naval Forces. The Chinese Communist Navy, though untried and untested consists of the following units:

1 - CL	6 - PT
9 - PF	3 - SC
2 - PG	1 - AMC
3 - OPG	4 - LST
1 - PC	15 - LSI
12 - PR	13 - LSM
5 - OPR	2 - LSU
	6 - Auxiliaries

There is no firm indication concerning location of these ships, although all are believed to be in Chinese coastal waters. There are indications that the USSR has turned over to the Chinese Communists 6 to 10 submarines.

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While it is believed that there are yet no Chinese Communist personnel proficient in submarine operations, the possibility that they may be manned by "volunteers" must not be ruled out. Personnel strength of the Chinese Communist Navy is estimated at 15,000.

2. Waterlift Capacity. By utilizing the maximum water craft available to them, totaling approximately 610,000 tons, the Chinese Communists could undertake an initial lift accommodating 200,000 troops, of which only about 60,000 could be carried in vessels other than junks. This would mean coordination of an operation of at least 7 embarkation areas spread over about 1,000 miles of coast line. It would also mean that forces from the Shanghai-Hangchow area and Canton area probably would have to sail 24 to 48 hrs in advance of forces departing from the Amoy and Foochow staging areas in order to bring about a preponderance of force to bear against Nationalist positions. Although the extent of new construction is not known, reports continue to be received of the construction of landing craft in the area.

3. Airborne Capabilities. Reports continue to be received that the Chinese Communists have from 3,000 to 6,000 troops under training for airborne operations, although their state of training is unknown. It is estimated that the Chinese Communists have the capability of airlifting a total of 2,825 troops during an initial 24-hour period based on an estimated capability of 113 transport sorties with each plane carrying 25 troops.

B. What are the Demands on Chinese Communist Resources Made by Other Major Commitments?

1. Needs of Domestic Reconstruction. Although the Chinese Communists have gained a decisive military decision on the mainland, they are now confronted with the multiple tasks of: (1) reconstructing and maintaining a rail and main highway system totaling over 19,000 miles which has been in a state of continuous disrepair since 1937; (2) installing and repairing flood control systems in the critical food production areas of Central and North China; and (3) enforcing new economic policies such as requisitioning seasonal food stocks in lieu of taxes. The demands imposed upon the Chinese military establishment to implement or enforce these reconstruction measures will probably serve to divert a portion of the Communist field forces from undertaking external operations.

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2. Anti-guerrilla and Bandit Operations. Those dissident elements at present opposing Chinese Communist rule or actively resisting Chinese Communist forces on the mainland are estimated to fall in the categories of: (1) guerrilla groups, made up of Nationalist remnants, opportunists, or idealists; (2) traditional bandit or war lord groups such as have been operating in certain regions since time immemorial; and (3) those groups who participate in spontaneous local uprisings against oppression and confiscation of local Communist officials. It is estimated that there are probably 700,000 organized or semi-organized dissidents on the Chinese mainland. Dissidents have been a constant annoyance to the Chinese Communist regime and in recent months this activity has assumed the proportions of a serious problem in certain areas in Southwest and Central China. There has been no known commitment of Chinese Communist Air Forces for use in these operations.

3. The Korean Operation. To date the Chinese Communist regime has committed approximately 275,000 troops to the Korean theater of operations and is maintaining a force of 450,000 troops in reserve in Manchuria. Recent reports emanating from Paiping indicate that Chinese Communist casualties in Korea have been excessively heavy and that certain Chinese Communist leaders are becoming resigned to the Korean operation continuing over a long period of time without any early favorable development.

Communist air activities in Korea have been limited thus far to relatively small fighter operations which could be maintained without materially limiting Chinese Communist air capabilities respecting Taiwan.

The Korean campaign makes no demand on the Chinese Communist Navy.

4. Other Possible Campaigns (e.g. Indochina). The Chinese Communists have deployed in the South China area adjacent to Indochina at least 185,000 field force troops which are actively engaged in consolidating control of the area and would be available for an attack on Tonkin in case of open Chinese Communist intervention in Indochina.

C. Is Soviet Covert Assistance for an Assault on Taiwan Possible?

Recent experience with Sino-Soviet relations indicates that Soviet aid to the Chinese Communists would not be limited to planning, technical advice and logistic support, but may be expanded to substantially increase Chinese Communist capabilities in submarine, air and mine warfare.

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The use of "volunteer" air crews to operate a limited number of Soviet supplied aircraft must be considered as a possible device to avoid the appearance of overt action while providing substantial direct assistance to the Chinese Communists.

It is considered that neither of the Soviet surface fleets could operate effectively in the Taiwan area from present bases in the USSR. Naval vessels as well as aircraft would require the use of facilities in China. Of much more practical value to the Communists would be Soviet submarine forces, particularly for purposes of reconnaissance and the landing of special personnel.

E. What are Nationalist Capabilities to Repel an Assault:

(1) Ground Forces. The strength of the Nationalist ground forces is estimated to be 39 divisions, 8 brigades, and 6 independent regiments, comprising an over-all force of 437,000 troops. The majority of these, 305,000, are on Taiwan, while there are 31,000 in the Pescadores, 47,000 at Chinmen and 9,000 at Matsu. Taiwan is divided into four defense sectors; northern, central, southern and eastern. These sectors have been subdivided into separate Army and Division subsectors. The Nationalist defense concept calls for a static perimeter defense by the infantry forces, with armored force centrally located as a mobile reserve. Unaided, the Nationalist forces, with their present numbers, equipment, and morale could not continue to defend Taiwan successfully against a major assault.

(2) Naval Forces. The operational units of the Nationalist Navy are as listed below:

1 - DC	2 - PC	9 - YTL
6 - DE	2 - AMS	2 - AGSC
4 - PF	5 - SC	1 - ARL
4 - PCF	50 - YP	10 - IST
3 - OPG	1 - AR	8 - LSM
1 - CM	2 - AOL	6 - ISI
12 - AM	5 - APC	7 - LSU
3 - PGM	1 - YO	6 - AT

Of these units 35 to 50% may be inoperational at any one time for overhaul or repairs. Unless materially augmented by the U.S. Seventh Fleet, the Nationalist naval capabilities are extremely limited.

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The Navy consists of about 42,000 men, of which 11,000 are Marines. The personnel are fairly well trained, but the inefficiency and political activities of many senior officers detracts from the Navy's capabilities. Recent reports indicate that Navy morale, never too high, is becoming worse.

(3) Air Forces. The Nationalist Air Force consists of 845 aircraft, of which 345 are in tactical units and have an operational factor of 60%.

The over-all personnel strength of the CNAF totals 57,403, consisting of 34,459 assigned to air units and 22,944 assigned to ground units. There are currently 1,700 trained active pilots in the CNAF. While most personnel are fairly well trained, the Air Force lacks adequate maintenance facilities and spare parts. The morale of the Air Force, is according to recent reports, decreasing with enforced inactivity.

In its present status the CNAF has a very low relative combat capability to intercept effectively and destroy enemy aircraft and is not considered to be prepared to provide adequate air defense for Taiwan against the type of attack the Chinese Communists are deemed capable of mounting. However, the CNAF is believed to have the organizational structure and necessary personnel to absorb and utilize additional equipment needed to make it an effective force for the defense of Taiwan.

F. What are the Deficiencies of the Nationalists Which Would Have to be Met by US Aid in Order to Repel an Assault?

The Nationalist forces suffer from poor command structure, lack of inter-service coordination, shortages of some types of ammunition, equipment, fuel and a lowered morale. Without direct Soviet participation in an attack, however, and given material and moral aid by the United States, the probability of a successful defense of Taiwan would be greatly enhanced. The report of the Far East Command Survey Mission lists in detail the needed material. The presence of the United States Seventh Fleet and its active cooperation would be a decisive factor in such a successful defense.

II. WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF TAIWAN TO COMMUNIST CHINA AND TO THE USSR?

B. From a military and strategic point of view, what is the relevance or importance of various factors?

From a military and strategic point of view the loss of Taiwan to the Chinese Communists would deny to the U.S. a base, which while not presently

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employed, could, in the event of further hostilities with Communist China, be important as an air and submarine base for both offensive and defensive operations. It would also enable the Communists to impair the present U.S. Far East island defense chain, which extends from Hokkaido to the Philippines, and to that extent weaken the chain. It would provide the Communists with an air and naval base which could be used not only in the interdiction of U.S. lines of communication, but could also be employed as a base for aggressive attacks on Okinawa, the Philippines, and other areas to the south. The possession of bases on Taiwan would place the Chinese Communist Air Force nearly 400 miles closer to the Philippines than at present, thereby increasing penetration potential and the element of surprise. It must be remembered that the Japanese planes which attacked the Philippines in December 1941 staged from Taiwan.

III. WHAT EXTERNAL FACTORS WILL AFFECT COMMUNIST CHINA'S INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO TAIWAN IN 1951?

A. Considerations of over-all Soviet policy.

Over-all Soviet policy undoubtedly takes into consideration such factors as the so-called "new spirit" in Western Europe arising from the appointment of a Supreme Allied Commander, the possibility of French revival in Indochina, the present U.S. rearmament program, and a possible Chinese defeat in Korea. Consideration of such factors will influence any Soviet policy aimed at the invasion of Taiwan in 1951. If the Soviets were assured of a reasonable chance of success, or for reasons unknown to the U.S., felt that Taiwan must be taken in 1951, offensive action might be taken without regard to the above factors. The Soviets may also consider that such action might split the Western Powers and institute another war of attrition for the U.S. with slight effect on Soviet war potential. At the present time it is impossible to determine Soviet policy with regard to Taiwan except to state that Soviet policy does undoubtedly envisage eventual Chinese Communist control of Taiwan.

B. Consideration of U.S. counter-action.

U.S. Far East Naval forces were committed by the President to the defense of Taiwan for the duration of the Korean hostilities. Of all the foreign naval forces committed to the Far East, only the U.S. forces are

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considered available for the defense of Taiwan. Naval forces based at Okinawa would require at least one day to reach Taiwan. Naval forces engaged in the Korean operation would require at least two days to reach the area between Taiwan and the China coast. Availability of fleet units at the time, however, is impossible to predict. Presumably, the Chinese Communists are generally aware of fleet dispositions in the area. They might well seize an opportunity to attack Taiwan while U.S. naval forces were engaged in Korea.

Additional factors which could affect or influence Chinese Communist planning with respect to Taiwan could be: (1) Possible U.S. bombing of Communist Chinese urban areas and lines of communication; (2) naval blockade by the U.S.; and (3) greatly increased U.S. aid to Nationalist China.

IV. WHAT ARE COMMUNIST CHINA'S APPARENT INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO TAIWAN?

B. What intentions may be inferred from the present status of military preparations?

The fact that reports continue to be received of amphibious training, landing craft construction, increased troop strength and improvement and re-activation of Chinese Communist airfields on the China mainland opposite Taiwan is an indication that the Chinese Communists have not abandoned plans for an invasion of Taiwan.

V. WHAT IS THE PROBABLE PLACE OF TAIWAN IN CHINESE COMMUNIST OVER-ALL PLANNING DURING 1951?

A. What is the probable priority of Taiwan relative to other Communist Objectives in 1951?

It is apparent that Moscow and Peiping are in agreement that the Far East and Southeast Asia present a situation which can or must be mastered while exceptional opportunities prevail. It is probable that the Communists intend in the first instance to control Korea, take over Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, and bring about the fall of Indochina. The impact of the fall of Indochina would undoubtedly cause radiations of a critical nature in the political structure of Burma, Thailand, Malaya, and Indonesia. The most important objective in the entire area is without doubt Japan, in regard to which the first Communist aim is undoubtedly that of eliminating U.S. influence and prestige. In short, the Soviet and Chinese Communists plan to exterminate Western influence in all of Asia. Exactly where Taiwan fits into this plan, as to timing, is impossible to estimate.

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B. What course of action are the Communists most likely to adopt with respect to Taiwan in 1951?

Any action aimed by the Communists at the control by them of Taiwan will probably involve in the first instance, political maneuver and negotiations, and in the second, direct military assault. It can be expected that whatever action may be taken by the Chinese Communists, subversive action will be present to the greatest extent possible. In view of the success of the ruthless Nationalist security system, it is not considered that subversive action alone could result in Communist control of Taiwan.

The Chinese Communist regime has firmly stated its intention to "liberate" Taiwan and has indicated that it hopes to effect the withdrawal of U.S. protection of that island by political means if possible, primarily through using the Korean situation as a powerful lever. There is little reason to believe, however, that it would not attempt to invade Taiwan if it deemed that political negotiations would be of no avail and that it were prepared to undertake an invasion and were reasonably assured of gaining its objective.

Since the international political implications of Chinese intervention in Korea differ fundamentally from those that would obtain concerning Taiwan, it is unlikely that the Chinese Communists would give prior warning of a plan to invade Taiwan at a particular time. In the eyes of the Peiping government, Taiwan is the last major portion of unredeemed Chinese territory.

Aside from Oriental considerations of prestige, it probably looms large in Chinese Communist eyes from the standpoint of short-term defensive and long-term offensive strategy. Viewed in the light of Communist intentions regarding Asia as a whole, the "liberation" of Taiwan would mean further removal of U.S. influence from that area.

In this respect, the timing of the Chinese Communist attempt to possess Taiwan may conceivably be influenced more by defensive fears than by aggressive desires. If Communist China looked upon Taiwan merely as the fulfillment of territorial redemption it would probably be inclined to defer attempts at invasion until the prospect of success were fairly assured. However, if the Chinese Communists assessed that Taiwan were to become a bastion

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of U.S. supported Nationalist strength from which the mainland would one day be invaded, they might then take action against Taiwan with less regard for the risk involved and designed at the minimum to cancel Nationalist strength as much as possible in order to forestall such an attack against the mainland.

The timing of a Chinese Communist military assault would be influenced by weather conditions and the location of the main bodies of Communist troops on the mainland. Operationally, the seasonable monsoons are handicaps. During July to October typhoons may interrupt all movements for two or three days, causing widespread damage to telecommunications, roads and railroads. From November through March the northeast monsoons seriously affect all of Taiwan, rendering difficult any amphibious operation which is not properly equipped with modern landing craft. Weather and sea conditions are most favorable during the transition period of April and May. During June, July and August the southeast summer monsoon results in moderate sea and surf conditions.

Since it is estimated that present Chinese Communist military strength in southeast China is insufficient to support a successful amphibious operation, the Chinese Communists would have to undertake a major shift of forces from other areas to the critical staging areas located in the seven ports located between Shanghai and Canton. The major ones being Swatow, Amoy and Foochow. It is estimated that this major troop deployment to the main staging areas would entail a period of 90 days